

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS AND DECISIONS

**CISAC Working Group on Biological Weapons Control
Planning Meeting
October 5, 1993**

BW Conversion

1. If the proposed NAS program for the Department of Defense on conversion assistance goes forward, and includes BW, the Working Group is interested in helping to at least launch the effort.

a. For this purpose (and for the Working Group's other activities), it seems likely that a trip to Moscow in early 1994 will be needed.

b. In advance of such a trip, considerable research would be needed to find out about, and then make contact with, individuals and institutions who might be of interest for conversion projects or other activities.

c. The Russian Academy is probably not the channel for conversion projects like the ones the Group has been discussing (see #2 below). Since the NAS does not feel bound to work through the Russian Academy for its much larger program, if Working Group projects are part of that effort, it may be relatively easy to disengage from Petrov & co. for this activity.

2. Tom Monath's idea for cooperative work on dangerous diseases remains the best potential project. To get things moving, the initial effort should be between the U.S. and Russia, and should begin with laboratories like Sandakchiev's. Involving the purely military labs will require greater openness than is currently the case, and a more broadly international effort will take more time to develop. Both of the latter goals are important, however, and should be what the project works toward.

3. Encouraging greater transparency from the Russian military remains extremely important, and military-to-military contacts appear the best vehicle for that. The Russian Academy does not appear a profitable channel for such efforts. Josh Lederberg and John Steinbruner will take advantage of having General Kuntsevitch here for the CISAC meeting in late October to assess whether he could be helpful in this regard. More broadly, this will be an opportunity to decide how much we would want to work with him in future projects.

Smallpox

1. At the moment there is nothing that the Working Group needs to do, since it seems likely that the December deadline for destruction will be postponed to ensure a more thorough international discussion.

2. As an individual, Josh Lederberg will try to find outlets to publish the results of the discussions at the Glasgow conference, as one means of encouraging international attention.

Anthrax/Sverdlovsk

1. Further disclosures about what happened in Sverdlovsk will require a political decision at a relatively high level (not necessarily Yeltsin, but close to his level). Recent events might actually enhance the chances for openness, but that is the view of only some analysts.

2. There are a number of rather modest efforts that could help advance knowledge about the remaining questions regarding the Sverdlovsk incident. Most of these would be indirect, however, and would deal with more general issues of anthrax pathogenesis.

a. A small conference in Sverdlovsk on some aspect of anthrax might make productive connections. There are Americans and credible Russians who are interested and could make contributions.

b. One topic might be the anthrax vaccine that the Russians have said they developed, about which little is known in the West.

c. It might be possible to develop small joint research efforts. A conference devoted to discussing the research challenges posed by anthrax could be a first step toward such projects.

3. Once Matt Meselson's findings are published they could provide the basis for further discussion of Sverdlovsk, and the Working Group might be one vehicle for dissemination. At present, there is still no one on the Russian side prepared to or capable of playing a role comparable to Meselson's in promoting further disclosures.

Bilateral Cooperation

1. Verification.

a. The Working Group will keep in contact with Elisa Harris as the Administration develops its strategies to strengthen the BWC through greater "transparency." A meeting with her on this topic may be arranged later.

b. On these issues, bilateral contacts and discussions appear to remain useful.

c. With the idea that any regime of disclosure must be simple and easy for nations to comply with, John Steinbruner and Tom Monath agreed to revise their classification scheme to produce a simplified list and a short discussion paper on how a disclosure regime might operate. They agreed to a 3 week deadline (about October 26th) for a first draft.

2. A Grassroots Movement by Physicians against BW.

a. After further discussion, especially comments from Matt Meselson, the group decided that this sort of effort would not be worthwhile, and could even have negative consequences.

3. Global Surveillance.

a. The recommendations of the report on Emerging Infections have been adopted by the Centers for Disease Control. At present, the main issue is how to get funds for the new projects into the budget cycle.

b. As these projects develop, there may be a basis for bilateral cooperation.

4. Intelligence Sharing.

a. The group decided that these activities are best left to develop through the military-to-military channels that it hopes will be developed.

Next Steps: Josh Lederberg and John Steinbruner will meet with Rem Petrov and General Kuntsevitch on October 27th during the main CISAC meeting with its Russian counterpart group. A schedule and potential topics for a next meeting, presumably in Russia, will be discussed.